



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Government Administration and Elections Committee
March 23, 2008 Public Hearing

Testimony of State Representative Carlo Leone
in Support of HB 5965

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THOMAS PAINE DAY

Chairman Slossberg, Chairman Spallone and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. For the record my name is State Representative Carlo Leone from the 148th District in Stamford. First I would to thank the committee for raising this bill and the opportunity to submit testimony here today. This is now the fourth year in a row I have presented testimony to this committee and I am hopeful that this will be the year it gets passed.

Thomas Paine was a prolific and world famous author and theorist most known for his published works, "Common Sense, Rights of Man, and the Age of Reason." He is considered by many to be "the father of the American Revolution," due to the events his work inspired.

The words of Thomas Paine have inspired many to strive for political, economic and social advancement. He was among the first to call for an end to slavery, the establishment of human rights around the world, the promotion of universal and equal education for boys and girls, equality for women, and religious freedom. Thomas Paine was one of the true leaders of the American Revolution and is regarded as one of the Founding Fathers alongside Washington, Madison, Franklin and Jefferson. He was also one of the most brilliant political philosophers of his time.

So far ten other states have passed annual resolutions - Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Maine, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Vermont. These states have chosen to honor him for his legacy by declaring there to be a Thomas Paine Day. Four of them are in New England, which leaves only Connecticut and Maine as the remaining New England states not to declare a day in his honor.

Considering that Connecticut was one of the original 13 colonies, I think it would be fitting to have a day that would honor him for his accomplishments and the instrumental role he played in

leading the cause for independence of our country. His life and work continue to inspire those who seek liberty and democracy all over the world.

In 1992, 73 legislators approving a site for his DC memorial agreed that, "More than anyone else, his foresight and ability transformed a collection of weak colonies into a united free nation, and, he deserves a place of honor in the capital of the country he helped build."

For these reasons I ask that your committee support this bill to declare January 29th of each year Thomas Paine Day in the state of Connecticut.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and I would be glad to answer any questions.